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Partnership dialogues

Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Concept paper prepared by the secretariat

1. The present concept paper for the partnership dialogue on the theme "Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea", prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 70/303, covers target 14.c of the Sustainable Development Goals. The paper is based on inputs received from Member States, intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations system and other stakeholders.[1]

I. Introduction

2. The First Global Integrated Marine Assessment, a summary of which was approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/257, provides a stark picture of the current state of our oceans. Anthropogenic pressures on marine ecosystems, such as marine pollution, overexploitation of marine living resources, coastal degradation, climate change and ocean acidification, are challenging the resilience of the oceans and their resources, as well as their continued ability to provide important ecosystem goods and services to humankind. The General Assembly noted with concern the findings of the Assessment that the world's ocean is facing

* A/CONF.230/1.

[1] Given the word limit for the concept paper, not all inputs have been included in their entirety, but they can be accessed at: https://oceanconference.un.org/documents.

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major pressures simultaneously with such great impacts that the limits of its carrying capacity are being, or, in some cases, have been reached.

3. Addressing such pressures and their impacts requires effective cross-sectoral coordination and extensive cooperation among States at the global, regional and bilateral levels, including through intergovernmental organizations. International law, as reflected in the Convention, provides the strongest basis for such cooperation, and its effective implementation is thus critical to the sustainable development of oceans and their resources.

II. Status and trends

4. The Convention provides the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out, and is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector. It currently has 168 States Parties, including the European Union, and many of its provisions are also considered to reflect customary international law.

5. Integration of the environmental, social and economic dimensions is at the core of the Convention. The Convention recognizes the desirability of establishing, with due regard for the sovereignty of all States, a legal order for the seas and oceans which will facilitate international communication and promote the peaceful uses of the seas and oceans, the equitable and efficient utilization of their resources, the conservation of their living resources, and the study, protection and preservation of the marine environment. To that end, the Convention establishes that there is a delicate balance between the need for economic and social development through the use of the oceans and their resources and the need to conserve and manage those resources in a sustainable manner and to protect and preserve the marine environment. The effective implementation of the Convention can therefore make a significant contribution to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) and is thus critical to the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources.

6. The Convention recognizes that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole. Its 320 articles, divided into 17 parts, with nine annexes, cover almost every aspect of the management of the oceans and their resources, including: the limits of the various maritime zones and the rights and duties of States therein, including rights and duties regarding navigation; the conservation and management of marine living resources, the exploitation of non-living resources, marine scientific research; and the protection and preservation of the marine environment, including from various sources of pollution; and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Central to the Convention is the balance of the enjoyment of rights and benefits with the concomitant undertaking of duties and obligations.

7. The Convention is at the centre of a broad and complex international legal framework for oceans, which includes its two implementing agreements — the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 and the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (Fish Stocks Agreement) — and a wide array of international legal instruments at the global and regional levels covering many

aspects of ocean use, including the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources.[2]

8. Such instruments include global treaties relating to sustainable fisheries management, pollution from ships, maritime safety, atmospheric pollution, the release of hazardous substances into the environment, the protection of certain species or habitats and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, the working conditions of seafarers, fishers and other maritime workers and other relevant instruments. A number of regional treaties are also included in this framework, including in relation to regional bodies, such as regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements and regional seas conventions and action plans. In addition, relevant goals and targets are addressed in a host of "soft law" instruments, ranging from the outcome documents of the successive United Nations conferences and summits on sustainable development and the annual General Assembly resolutions on oceans and the law of the sea and on sustainable fisheries to guidelines, codes of conduct and programmes of action.

9. The effective implementation of the legal framework for the oceans, with the Convention at its core, will have a critical impact on progress in all the target areas of Sustainable Development Goal 14. While many steps have been taken to strengthen the implementation of international law, as reflected in the Convention, at all levels, its full and effective implementation is necessary in order to achieve the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources.

10. Progress at the global and regional levels has included an increase in participation in the Convention and related instruments and the development of additional instruments, accompanied in some cases by technical guidelines for their implementation, and related management tools which give effect to the provisions of the Convention and its implementing agreements. Continued efforts have also been made to strengthen the applicable international legal framework with additional instruments to address emerging challenges. In particular, the General Assembly decided to develop a legally binding instrument under the Convention on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction and established a preparatory committee to that end.[3] Efforts to enhance international cooperation and coordination, including of a cross-sectoral nature have also been stepped up in support of the implementation of relevant instruments. In addition, many States have taken action at the national level to implement international obligations, including through the promulgation and implementation of national legislation, rules and regulations.

III. Challenges and opportunities

11. Despite these positive and encouraging developments, it is generally recognized that a number of challenges remain to be addressed, in particular those resulting from predominantly sectoral approaches to ocean management, as well as ineffective implementation and compliance, mostly due to lack of coordination and capacity. There are several opportunities which can be explored to reverse this trend, which is resulting in a continuous decline in the health and productivity of the ocean. Solutions will require the involvement of all stakeholders and will need to be understood and implemented within, and often across, global, regional, national and local contexts.

[2] The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was intended to be developed further through detailed rules adopted by competent international organizations, including at the regional level.

[3] See resolution 69/292.

Addressing gaps in participation and coverage

12. The effectiveness of international legal instruments is impacted by the level of participation by States. Not all States are yet parties to the Convention and related instruments. In some cases, low-level participation has prevented or delayed the entry into force of the instruments or hampered their effectiveness in the achievement of their objectives. For example, increased participation in the Fish Stock Agreement and the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing are needed to ensure that they achieve their objectives. Other examples include the limited participation in the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter of 1972 and the 1996 Protocol thereto and in liability-related instruments. Pollution of the marine environment from land-based sources could also be more effectively addressed if all States, including landlocked States, were to participate in the work under relevant ocean-related instruments, including within the framework of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities. Further participation in and strengthening of relevant regional organizations and instruments would also enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources.

13. The General Assembly has encouraged States that have not done so to become parties to relevant instruments and has also consistently called upon States to implement their obligations. To that end, efforts have been ongoing to assist States in becoming parties to the relevant instruments and/or in implementing their obligations.

14. Gaps also exist with regard to the material or geographical scope of relevant instruments. For example, while some aspects of marine debris, plastics and microplastics are covered by several global, regional and national instruments, none, other than some regional action plans on marine litter, is specifically dedicated to these issues. Some geographic areas remain uncovered by regional instruments relevant to the implementation of aspects of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Fish Stocks Agreement. The resumed Review Conference on the Fish Stocks Agreement, convened pursuant to article 36 of the Agreement, has recommended the establishment of new regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements or the expansion by existing such organizations and arrangements of their geographical and/or species coverage to close those gaps. The United Nations Environment Assembly also encouraged the contracting parties to existing regional seas conventions to consider the possibility of increasing the regional coverage of those instruments in accordance with international law.

Addressing challenges of implementation

15. All States, and, in particular, developing countries, are challenged by the implementation of the comprehensive legal framework in the Convention and other legal instruments. There is, in particular, a need for sustained capacity-building, infrastructure, including the transfer of marine technology, financing and increased and improved cooperation and coordination at all levels, in particular cross-sectoral cooperation. In this context, it is important to consider the special challenges faced by small island developing States, landlocked developing countries and the least developed countries with regard to accessing and realizing the benefits arising from the sustainable development of the oceans and their resources.

Defining maritime zones and national legislation

16. An often-overlooked aspect in effectively conserving and sustainably using oceans and their resources is the fact that clearly defined and duly publicized limits of maritime zones under national jurisdiction are an essential basis for States to derive benefits from the oceans and their resources, as they provide legal certainty with regard to the extent of the sovereignty or sovereign rights and jurisdiction of coastal States. For this purpose, the Convention contains detailed deposit and due publicity obligations for States parties. While there have been an increasing number of actions relating to the delineation and delimitation of maritime zones since the entry into force of the Convention, only a minority of coastal States have, thus far, discharged their deposit and due publicity obligations under the Convention. In some areas, overlapping maritime claims exist which can adversely impact their effective management.

17. Effective and comprehensive national legislation is another essential basis for the sustainable development of oceans and their resources. Implementing the comprehensive legal framework governing oceans at the national level is challenging, however. In particular, several articles of the Convention require States to adopt laws and regulations which must conform to, take into account or be no less effective than the relevant global rules and standards, and also to ensure their enforcement. Nonetheless, the identification of the relevant instruments can sometimes be a difficult task, given that these instruments are not explicitly mentioned in the Convention and new international technical regulations and standards are constantly adopted or updated.

18. In addition, a number of treaty obligations and, even more so, soft law provisions tend to promote action or the adoption of a particular behaviour by States as opposed to the attainment of particular standards or results. Consequently, guidance on the precise measures that States need to take to meet their obligations and the time frames within which such obligations are to be met would be useful, including for the development of effective domestic legislation.

Increasing cooperation and coordination at all levels, including cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination

19. The effective implementation of legal and policy instruments is further affected by the regulatory and administrative structure at the national level. Policies and national legislation related to ocean affairs are still largely fragmented in many States, their implementation suffering from insufficient intersectoral coordination and the constraints resulting from competing interests. In particular, limited coordination between the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and biodiversity and conservation sectors is an issue. It was noted that greater integration of the legal regimes for land, air/climate and ocean would create synergies among efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda. There has also been insufficient mainstreaming of ocean health and sustainable management into national development strategies and plans. In addition, insufficient use is made of management tools that can foster integrated approaches.

20. Thus, despite longstanding recognition of the need for increased cooperation and coordination at all levels, including cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination, efforts aimed at the management of oceans and their resources remain fragmented and in many cases ineffective. Many efforts are limited to specific regions or sectors, and may operate completely independently despite common goals, thereby

leading to gaps and in some cases, duplication of efforts. Opportunities to benefit from important synergies may be missed.

21. Dialogues have been initiated between regional seas organizations and regional fisheries bodies. Some regions, such as the South-East Pacific region and the Regional Organization for Protection of the Marine Environment Sea Area, have started developing cross-sectoral regional strategies. However, insufficient attention continues to be paid to the cumulative impact of sectoral activities on the sustainability of oceans. The need for increased coordination between global and regional initiatives has been noted.

22. The Convention provides a framework for international cooperation in the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and its resources, and its effective implementation requires effective cooperation and coordination at all levels. Such cooperation can take place through intergovernmental institutions or bilaterally among States.

23. At the global level, the General Assembly through its annual review of developments in ocean affairs and the law of the sea provides a global mechanism for further enhancing integrated and coordinated approaches, taking into full consideration developments in other relevant multilateral organizations and with the aim of promoting a science-policy interface and multi-stakeholder engagement. The General Assembly has consistently recognized the need to improve cooperation and coordination at all levels, in accordance with the Convention, to support and supplement, inter alia, the efforts of each State in promoting the sustainable development of the oceans and seas.

24. However, although the General Assembly's subsidiary bodies are open to a broad range of stakeholders, experts from relevant government agencies within developing countries are often not able to participate owing to lack of funding. It is thus necessary to build capacity, including financial capacity, to ensure broad and multi-disciplinary participation in intergovernmental processes and the development of inclusive sustainable solutions to multifaceted problems. In the context of the work of the General Assembly, this would support the full realization of the integrated and holistic approach at the core of its work.

Addressing resource and capacity constraints

25. The General Assembly has recognized that the realization of the benefits of the Convention could be enhanced by international cooperation, technical assistance and advanced scientific knowledge, as well as by funding and capacity-building. However, human, institutional and systemic capacities, as well as financing, continue to be the primary limiting factors, in particular for developing countries. The specific challenges of these States in implementation are recognized in a number of instruments, some of which, such as the Convention and the Fish Stocks Agreement, contain provisions relating to capacity-building, the transfer of marine technology and assistance.

26. Human capacity development is a critical element in assisting States in implementing the relevant instruments. The continuously evolving and integrated nature of ocean issues requires that the people engaged in them will inevitably need to acquire an integrated and cross-sectoral familiarity of all aspects in a continuous manner so that they are able to function effectively in this ever-changing environment. In that context, States, the competent international organizations and the secretariats of various instruments have engaged in extensive efforts to build human capacity and raise awareness of States' obligations under various instruments. Current efforts at building capacity which are targeted to provide cross-

sectoral and multi-disciplinary perspectives need to be further supported to meet growing needs for assistance.

27. Resource capacity, including financial capacity, also remains a significant constraint, for example, in relation to the protection and preservation of the marine environment and marine scientific research. Although a number of programmes assist States in developing such capacity, the overall level of assistance does not match current levels of demand.

28. In particular, financial support is required to assist developing countries in the implementation of the Convention and the Fish Stocks Agreement. Such support is generally provided bilaterally or through voluntary trust funds. However, the voluntary trust funds established by the General Assembly to support implementation of those instruments are for the most part depleted as funding remains largely dependent on voluntary contributions. There is thus a need to consider new and innovative ways of sustainable financing.

29. Where technology constraints are an impediment to the effective implementation of a State's obligations, such as lack of adequate monitoring, control and surveillance equipment and technology to control fishing activities in waters under national jurisdiction or lack of adequate discharge infrastructure in ports, the relevant instruments have included provisions for technology transfer. However, implementation of some of these provisions has been insufficient.

Improving monitoring and review of implementation

30. There are several mechanisms available for monitoring and review of the implementation of international law, as reflected in the Convention.

31. Although a number of instruments related to shipping, fisheries and the marine environment require their parties to provide reports, neither the Convention nor its implementing agreements contains any reporting requirements for their parties. The Convention requires the Secretary-General to report to all States Parties, the International Seabed Authority and competent international organizations on issues of a general nature that have arisen with respect to the Convention. The reports are also submitted to the General Assembly, which carries out annual reviews of oceans affairs and the law of the sea under the agenda item on oceans and the law of the sea. The outcome of such reviews is the adoption, annually, of a comprehensive resolution on oceans and the law of the sea, which addresses issues relating to the implementation of the Convention, its implementing agreements and related agreements.

32. In addition, the Review Conference convened pursuant to article 36 of the Fish Stocks Agreement serves to review and assess the effectiveness of the Agreement in securing the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks. The Review Conference, which was first convened in 2006 and resumed in 2010 and 2016, has on each occasion adopted sets of recommendations to strengthen the implementation of the Agreement. These have taken into account the informal consultations of States Parties to the Fish Stocks Agreement, in the context of which States have voluntarily reported the measures they have taken to implement the Agreement. The General Assembly also reviews the implementation of international law relevant to sustainable fisheries, including the Fish Stocks Agreement, through its annual resolutions on sustainable fisheries. In this context, the General Assembly specifically reviews the implementation of certain paragraphs of its resolutions addressing the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish

stocks, which have contributed to its annual assessments regarding sustainable fisheries.

33. The Convention also provides that, every five years from its entry into force, the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority shall undertake a general and systematic review of how the international regime of the Area established under the Convention has operated in practice. In the light of this review, the Assembly may take, or recommend that other organs take, measures in accordance with the provisions and procedures of part XI of the Convention and the annexes relating thereto, which will lead to the improvement of the operation of the regime. The first review is currently ongoing.

34. Formal, multilateral compliance committees, as are commonly found under multilateral environmental agreements, are not widespread in the law of the sea but do exist, mainly in the context of fisheries. The purpose of such procedures is to identify compliance difficulties in a non-adversarial manner, either once non-compliance has been assessed or to prevent such non-compliance from arising. The Convention does not provide for a formal collective compliance mechanism, relying instead on individual means of ensuring compliance, in particular responsibilities entrusted to flag States, coastal and port States as a means of overcoming lack of compliance by other parties, as well as an extensive dispute resolution mechanism. Since the adoption of the Convention, however, some instruments related to the law of the sea include provisions for formal collective compliance mechanisms. Besides the compliance bodies established under regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements, this includes the Compliance Group established in 2007 pursuant to article 11 of the 1996 Protocol to the London Convention 1972, and the Compliance Committee established in 2008 under the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention). The International Maritime Organization Member State Audit Scheme, which has been mandatory since 1 January 2016, is designed to provide audited International Maritime Organization Member States with a comprehensive and objective assessment of how effectively they implement the mandatory instruments of the Organization which are covered by the scheme. The scheme aims to support the enhanced implementation of the Organization's instruments and the process is also expected to feed into the Organization's technical cooperation programme, to provide targeted assistance and capacity-building to States, as well as to the Organization's regulatory processes.

35. In addition, performance reviews of the manner in which regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements carry out their mandate have been undertaken by a number of such organizations and arrangements.

36. While assessments and reviews of implementation have been carried out in various fora, assessments remain incomplete, owing to a low level of response to reporting requirements and limited available information on how States have followed up on their obligations and commitments. Even where they exist, compliance mechanisms are rarely used or are not used to their full extent. As at 2016, no cases of non-compliance had been referred to the Compliance Group under the London Protocol or to the Compliance Committee under the Barcelona Convention.

IV. Existing partnerships

37. The General Assembly has consistently called upon States and international institutions, including through bilateral, regional and global cooperation programmes, technical partnerships and fellowships:

- To support and strengthen capacity-building activities in developing countries, in particular small island developing States and the least developed countries, to develop their maritime administration and appropriate legal frameworks to establish or enhance the necessary infrastructure, legislative and enforcement capabilities to promote effective compliance with and implementation and enforcement of their responsibilities under international law;

- To continue to support and strengthen capacity-building activities, in particular in developing countries, in the field of marine scientific research by, inter alia, training personnel to develop and enhance relevant expertise, providing the necessary equipment, facilities and vessels and transferring environmentally sound technologies;

- To develop and strengthen capacity-building activities in and to transfer to developing countries, in particular small island developing States and the least developed countries, on mutually agreed terms, and taking into account the Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, environmentally sound technologies to study and minimize the impacts of ocean acidification;

- To strengthen South-South cooperation as an additional way to build capacity and as a cooperative mechanism to further enable countries to set their own priorities and needs and to foster actions to implement such cooperation.

38. Several activities currently undertaken in support of the implementation of international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources have been carried out as partnerships by a varied range of stakeholders, including States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, foundations and other private entities. In addition, there exist a number of partnerships aimed at addressing specific aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, which, inter alia, support the implementation of international law. The breadth of the existing partnerships and their aims thus vary widely.

39. Existing partnerships include partnerships related to the implementation of specific instruments. Other partnerships are aimed at implementing international law in relation to certain sectors or activities, such as the governance of coastal fisheries; sustainable fisheries management and the conservation of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction; marine scientific research; oceanography; the building of technical and institutional capacity in regions for the assessment and transboundary management of shared resources; access to and sharing of benefits derived from the utilization of marine genetic resources; seabed mining; the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping; addressing the working conditions of people at sea; natural resources governance; regional management regimes; cooperation between regional seas organizations and regional fisheries bodies; integrated coastal and ocean management; ecosystem-based management; marine spatial planning; and the management and governance of protected areas.

40. The types of activities engaged in by the partnerships also vary, as some focus, inter alia, on education and training, the dissemination of knowledge and/or data, the exchange of information, the development of common or cooperative standards or approaches and advocacy and research.

41. Significant progress has been achieved through partnerships on specific issues. For example, the Office of Legal Affairs, through its Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, implements a number of needs-based capacity-building activities which provide cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary perspectives. Some

examples include fellowships for the strategic building of capacity across a wide range of issues, including the importance of ocean science for governance; as well as demand-driven multidisciplinary training programmes in ocean affairs and the law of the sea. Other examples provided include International Seabed Authority partnerships that have contributed to strengthening the protection and preservation of the marine environment in the Area. Capacity-building activities have also been conducted under regional instruments such as the Regional Seas programmes.

42. However, the breadth and the scope of the challenges in fully and effectively implementing international law, as reflected in the Convention require substantial and long-term efforts. Additional challenges facing existing partnerships were noted. Sustained financing to support ocean-related activities, including capacity-building initiatives in support of the full implementation of the Convention, the Fish Stocks Agreement and other instruments, remains insufficient. For example, the Global Environment Facility-UNDP-International Maritime Organization global maritime energy efficiency partnership project was limited to 10 lead pilot countries owing to its limited financial resources.

43. A need to enhance coherence amongst different initiatives was also noted. In particular, the need to strengthen United Nations-Oceans was noted, in the light of the importance of inter-agency and cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination among the United Nations numerous entities with mandates in oceans and the law of the sea and the International Seabed Authority. It was also recommended that efforts to strengthen regional organizations include analysis of gaps, overlaps and interactions among organizations and the identification and strengthening of coordinating mechanisms.

V. Possible areas for new partnerships

44. There are significant opportunities for additional partnerships aimed at enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the Convention. Some examples of possible areas for additional partnerships include activities to: raise awareness of the comprehensive legal and policy framework for the sustainable development of oceans and seas, in particular the Convention, its implementing agreements and other relevant ocean-related instruments; develop the capacity of States towards broader participation in and the effective implementation of the Convention and its implementing agreements and related instruments; strengthen integrated and cross-sectoral approaches to the management of oceans and their resources, for example through the development of a national ocean policy or regional ocean policy; develop the necessary infrastructure and/or enforcement capabilities to comply with international law, as reflected in the Convention and as complemented by other ocean-related instruments by assisting in the development of adequate policy, legislation or regulation to implement the Convention, as well as at building the necessary monitoring, control and surveillance and enforcement capacity. There is also a need for cross-sectoral partnerships to enhance integrated, cooperative or coordinated management.

45. Partnerships can also play a key role in supporting efforts towards ensuring that all States and relevant stakeholders are able to participate meaningfully in international processes and that solutions to multifaceted problems are understood and implemented within the global, regional, national and local contexts and across these levels.

46. Additional areas highlighted by stakeholders include: strengthening national legislation and technical capacities; the accession to or ratification of international

legal instruments; the drafting of bilateral instruments; supporting stronger channelling of official development assistance for developing countries towards maritime activities and coastal populations; cultural heritage, including underwater cultural heritage; recognition of the natural and strategic relationship between oceans and small island developing States; the promotion of regional management of the oceans, particularly through regional seas conventions and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements; the promotion of regional initiatives, including recent initiatives for specific areas such as the Mediterranean and the Caribbean; support for the work towards the development of an international legally binding instrument under the Convention on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction; and capacity-building and transfer of marine technology for the implementation of such legally binding instrument.

47. Generally, there is a need for broader stakeholder involvement in partnerships aimed at the effective implementation of international law, to include different types of stakeholders with shared interests, including civil society stakeholders.

VI. Guiding questions for the dialogue

48. Guiding questions for the dialogue are as follows:

- What are some of the key legal and implementation gaps in relation to enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the Convention and what new partnerships are required to address them?
- How to increase partnerships aimed at raising awareness of the importance of the implementation of the international legal framework for the oceans to achieving each of the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 14 and strengthening participation in existing international instruments, as well as their effective implementation at the global, regional and national levels?
- What are the most urgent needs of developing countries in terms of capacity-building, the transfer of marine technology and financing to support their implementation of international law, as reflected in the Convention, and what new partnerships are required to address those needs?
- Building on the existing regional and global instruments, how can enhanced cross-sectoral cooperation and integrated management be achieved and what partnerships could be promoted in that regard?